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SUBJECT: World Congress III Against Sexual Exploitation of Children,
Rio de Janeiro

Ref: 08 Brasilia 01608

¶1. SUMMARY: The Government of Brazil underscored its commitment to tackling complex social issues by hosting the World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children. The Congress gathered more than 3,500 delegates from over 170 countries to discuss, among other issues, new forms of sexual exploitation, legal frameworks, corporate initiatives, and strategies for international cooperation. The USG delegation played a key role in the drafting of the final version of the Rio Declaration (Outcome Document) that was released at the end of the Congress pledging participants "to undertake as a matter of priority the necessary measures to prevent and stop the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents." END SUMMARY

¶2. The World Congress III Against the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents was hosted by the Government of Brazil in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, November 25-28. It was convened by UNICEF, the NGO End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography, and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT), and the NGO Group on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The purpose of the Congress was to review developments and actions taken in follow-up to the Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action 1996 (World Congress I) and the Yokohama Global Commitment 2001 (World Congress II), and to identify lessons learned and key challenges and commit to a Plan of Action to prevent, prohibit, and stop the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

¶3. At the opening ceremony on November 25, President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva was joined on stage by First Lady Marisa Lula da Silva (the official host of the conference), Queen Silvia of Sweden, various Brazilian cabinet members, and several other dignitaries as he welcomed some 3,500 delegates from approximately 170 countries around the world to the Congress. To underscore Brazil's commitment to fighting the sexual exploitation of children, President Lula pulled out his pen and in front of the assembled delegates and press signed into law a bill that made possession of child pornography a felony - the first time it has been criminalized in Brazil (reftel).

¶4. The 21-person United States Government (USG) delegation was led by Department of Justice Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division Sigal Mandelker and included representatives from the Departments of State, Justice (DOJ), Homeland Security (DHS), Health and Human Services (HHS), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. Congress, and the U.S. Embassy in Brazil. In between plenary panel sessions on Forms of Sexual Exploitation and Its New Scenarios, Legal Framework and Accountability, Integrated Cross-Sector Policies, Initiatives of Corporate Social Responsibility, and Strategies for International Cooperation, USG delegates attended a series of over 80 small group

workshops keyed to those major five themes and covering every aspect of child sexual exploitation. Literature, brochures, and other materials on the sexual exploitation of children and what individual USG agencies are doing to fight it were distributed from a USG information booth throughout the conference.

¶15. Delegation head Mandelker's remarks on child pornography and the importance of changing the way the public refers to the issue - i.e. it is really visual images and evidence of sexual assault on children - were well-received, as were those of Trial Attorney Alexandra Gelber, from DOJ's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Division, on the Council of Europe's Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. Assistant Attorney General Jeffrey Sedgwick from the Office of Justice Programs gave a strong and detailed presentation on capacity building for law enforcement on child sexual exploitation cases. Besides providing a structured forum for the exchange of ideas, information, and best practices, the World Congress also provided a good opportunity for USG delegates to hold useful conversations on the margins with International Organization (IO), Non-Government Organization (NGO), and other foreign government experts from around the world.

¶16. The USG delegation played a key role in the drafting of the final version of the Rio Declaration (Outcome Document) that was released at the end of the Congress pledging participants "to undertake as a matter of priority the necessary measures to prevent and stop the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents." The nonbinding Outcome Document also incorporates the recommendations and discussions from the numerous thematic and regional preparatory meetings that were held in the six months leading up to World

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Congress III. (The Report of the Canada-US Consultation in Preparation for World Congress III Against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents can be found at: www.ecpat-a.org/pdfs/canada_us_consult_report). The USG delegation was also intricately involved in discussions on the final wording of the Plan of Action document which was a component of the overall Rio Declaration. Delegations worked deep into the night with Special Rapporteur Jaap Doek of the Netherlands to try to reach consensus on the wording of that important document, which is intended to serve as a blueprint for international action over the five-year period until the next World Congress is convened. The delegations could not reach consensus, so in the interest of bringing the Congress to a close, Special Rapporteur Doek decided that the document (Plan/Platform of Action) would remain open for comment and revision for 30 days (November 28-December 28). (Note: the USG subsequently provided comments before the deadline.)

¶17. COMMENT: By hosting the World Congress III Against the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents the Lula administration demonstrated once again its commitment to tackling difficult social issues. This was underscored by Lula's dramatic signing into law the bill making possession of child pornography a felony offense in Brazil (reftel). The Congress also highlighted Brazil's increasing desire to take a leadership role on important international issues and its ability to convoke a global audience to address such issues. Although consensus was not reached by key national government, international organization, and NGO participants on the final wording of the Plan/Platform of Action before the end of the Congress, agreement was reached on the vast majority of its provisions. END COMMENT